

Message Text

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CINPAC HONOLULU, HAWAII

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT JA

SUBJ: A JAUNDICED LOOK AT THE TOKYO GUBERNATORIAL

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF: (A) TOKYO 3013 AND (B) TOKYO 2454

SUMMARY: CAMPAIGNING GOT UNDERWAY IN TOKYO MARCH 19 IN THREE-WAY RACE FOR TOKYO GUBERNATORIAL APRIL 13. MINOBE BACKED HIMSELF INTO THE RACE THROUGH A SERIES OF BATHETIC MOVES EXTRAORDINARY EVEN IN THE LAND OF KUBUKI. STILL, HE IS SAID TO BE THE FRONTRUNNER AT THIS POINT. END SUMMARY.

1. CAMPAIGNING GOT UNDERWAY MARCH 19 WITH OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF GUBERNATORIAL ELECTIONS IN 17 PREFECTURES APRIL 13. FOREMOST AMONG THESE IS THREE-WAY RACE IN TOKYO INVOLVING GOVERNOR RYOKICHI MINOBE (JSP-JCP-KOMEITO), SHINTARO ISHIHARA (INDEPENDENT BACKED BY LDP), AND MASATOSHI MATSUSHITA (DSP).

2. ISHIHARA'S CANDIDACY ANNOUNCED MARCH 6 (REF A) MOVED
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MINOBE TO BACK AWAY FROM HIS ADAMANT STAND AGAINST

RUNNING FOR OFFICE (REF B) AND DECLARE HIS CANDIDACY THROUGH A DISPLAY OF BATHOS EXTRAORDINARY EVEN IN THE LAND OF KUBUKI. MINOBE SIGNALLED HIS INTENTIONS MARCH 6 BY DENOUNCING ISHIHARA. MINOBE SAID THAT IT MADE HIS BLOOD "FLOW BACKWARD" TO THINK THAT, BECAUSE OF HIS REFUSAL TO RUN, A "FASCIST" OF ISHIHARA'S ILK WOULD COME TO OCCUPY HIS OFFICE BY DEFAULT. ASKED BY THE PRESS WHETHER HE WOULD NOW CHANGE HIS MIND, MINOBE ALLOWED AS HOW HE COULD BE RECEPTIVE TO A "CALL FROM HEAVEN". THE CALL WAS SET UP FOR 10 A.M., MARCH 10. KOMEITO CHAIRMAN TAKEIRI CAME TO CALL AND IMPLORE MINOBE TO BE THE STANDARD-BEARER OF A NEW, "SPONTANEOUSLY FORMED" PARTY CALLED THE "CITIZEN'S PARTY" (TOMIN-TO). MINOBE THEN READ HIS SCRIPT. HE SAID THE "OLD MINOBE", WHO ADAMENTLY REFUSED TO RUN BECAUSE OF THE RUNNING FEUD BETWEEN JCP AND JSP ON THE "DOWA" ISSUE, "IS DEAD", BUT UNTP US "IS BORN A NEW MINOBE" RDSponding TO THE SPONTANEOUS CALL OF THE CITIZENRY OF TOKYO. THUSLY HE MADE KNOWN HIS INTENTION TO RUN REGARDLESS OF THE DOWA ISSUE OR JCP NON-SUPPORT.

3. THE JCP, CAUGHT OFF-GUARD, READILY ACCEDED TO AN APPEAL FROM MINOBE SUPPORTERS FOR A SHOWDOWN SESSION BETWEEN JSP CHAIRMAN NARITA AND JCP CHAIRMAN MIYOMOTO. (PLUS RESPRESENTATIVES FROM SOHYO AND THE SIX INTELLECTUALS) ON THE DOWA ISSUE. THE SESSION MARCH 11 LASTED CLOSE TO TEN HOURS. THE TWO CHAIRMEN REACHED A NON-SETTLEMENT IN TWO PARTS: TO REQUIRE DOWA LOAN APPLICANTS TO APPEAR AT BRIEFING SESSIONS CONDUCTED "IMPARTIALLY" UNTIL MARCH 31, AND THEREAFTER TO HAVE THEM APPEAR AT SESSIONS ADMINISTERED BY THE PRESUMABLY REELECTED MINOBE ON BASIS OF "FAIRNESS AND DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES." THIS IN EFFECT SHELVED THE DOWA CONTROVERSY UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTION, BUT WAS ENOUGH TO PERMIT THE JCP TO SAVE FACE AND JUMP ON HE MINOBE BANDWAGON. MINOBE FORMALLY DECLARED HIMSELF AS THE UNITED-FRONT CANDIDATE ON MARCH 17.

4. THE DSP FOUND ITSELF IN A QUANDARY, THE PARTY ABLE TO STOMACH NEITHER MINOBE NOR ISHIHARA, AND DOMEI LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SPLIT BETWEEN THE TWO. INSTEAD OF SITTING IT OUT, THE DSP UNDER CHAIRMAN KASUGA'S LEADERSHIP MARCH 14 SUMMONED FORTH A SACRIFICIAL LAMB, MATSUSHITA, 73- YEAR- OLD FORMER PRESIDENT OF RIKKYO UNIVERSITY WHO HAD RUN AS DSP-LDP CANDIDATE AGAINST MINOBE IN 1967, AND LOST. MATSUSHITA SAID THE CALL WAS A "BOLT OUT OF THE BLUE", A PHRASE NOT YET A CLICHE IN JAPANESE. SCUTTLEBUTT HAS IT THAT HE HAS BEEN PLEDGED THE PARTY'S SUPPORT

AS CANDIDATE IN THE NEXT LOWER HOUSE ELECTION. THE DSP REPORTEDLY TOOK THIS STEP ONLY TO PRESERVE THE PARTY'S IDENTITY AND UNITY FOR THE TOKYO ASSEMBLY ELECTION IN APRIL.

5. PRESS HAS NOTED THE LACK OF PARTISAN ENTHUSIASM FOR ANY OF THE CANDIDATES SO FAR. MINOBE HAS, OF COURSE, HURT HIMSELF BY HIS THREE-WEEK-LONG PREVARICATION AND INELEGANT REVERSAL. THE JSP REMAINS DEEPLY DIVIDED ON MINOBE AND DOWA AND UNABLE WHOLE-HEARTEDLY TO JOIN WITH THE JCP. KOMEITO, HAVING BEEN IGNORED BY MINOBE UNTIL CALLED UPON TO PLAY THE HEAVENLY ROLE ON MARCH 10, AS IF IN RECOMPENSE, IS SULKING. AMONG THE CONSERVATIVES, ISHIHARA, DESPITE HIS LATTERDAY EFFORTS TO MAKE AMENDS IN THE LDP CAMP, IS STILL REMEMBERED AS THE ABRASIVE DIET FRESHMAN WHO ATTACKED FORMER PRIMIN TANAKA AND HIS CRONIES IN THE "BUNGEI SHUNJU" MAGAZINE LAST SEPTEMBER, TWO MONTHS BEFORE ANOTHER ARTICLE LED TO TANAKA'S DOWNFALL. THE TANAKA AND OHIRA FACTIONS--TOO OF THE LARGER AND RICHER ONES--ARE NOT HEEDING ISHIHARA'S CALLS FOR HELP. MATSUSHITA IS SEEN AS A DSP AFTER-THOUGHT WHO STILL DOES NOT COMMAND THE UNDIVIDED SUPPORT OF DOMEI.

6. OF COURSE THE MOOD WILL CHANGE AS WE NEAR THE HOMESTRETCH. BUT EVEN THE TOKYO PRESS IS NOT WILLING AT THIS STAGE TO SAY WHO IS AND WILL STAY IN FRONT. THE PRESS DOES SAY, HOWEVER, THAT BASED ON 1971 ARITHMETIC, THE ODDS FAVOR MINOBE. OUT OF 5,400,000 VOTES CAST IN THAT YEAR, MINOBE GARNERED 3,600,000 AGAINST A LACK-LUSTER CONSERVATIVE. HE WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO EQUAL THIS RECORD, BUT COULD HE HAVE HURT HIMSELF TO THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TUNE OF ONE MILLION VOTES TO PUT HIMSELF BELOW THE 2,700,000 LEVEL THAT MAY BE NEEDED TO WIN IN THIS ELECTION? THE PRESS THINKS NOT, CONSIDERING THAT MATSUSHITA'S 500,000 TO 700,000 VOTES WILL HURT ISHIHARA MORE THAN MINOBE. BUT TOKYOITES ARE THE BANE OF PROGNOSTICATORS SINCE ANYWHERE FROM 22 TO 38 PERCENT OF THEM ARE SAID TO BE "UNDECIDED," BASED ON PAST ELECTIONS. HODGSON

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